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4/17/79

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

April 17, 1979

ACK. FAY/NSC
CONGRESSIONAL
LIAISON

APR 23 1979

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to seek your assistance in bringing an end to the widespread abuses of human rights in the Republic of Argentina.

Since March 1976, Argentina has been ruled by its military, which suspended political rights and activities and rules the country by decree. One of the most heinous abuses of this junta is the practice of kidnapping people suspected of opposing the government, or the acquaintances of such people. They are detained without charge for months, sometimes even years as in the case of Jacobo Timerman, editor and publisher of the newspaper La Opinion. Many are tortured or otherwise mistreated; some are even murdered.

The Nobel Prize-winning human rights group, Amnesty International, reports estimates of more than 15,000 "disappearances" in Argentina since the junta took control. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith places the estimates at closer to 20,000. B'nai B'rith has expressed the fear that many of these people may be dead. The Argentine government refuses to confirm or deny these reports.

I urge you to use this country's influence to help bring a halt to these frightening abuses of human rights. I also hope that you will impress upon the Argentine government the need for a comprehensive listing of the prisoners who are missing or presently being held in the detention camps. They should either be released or allowed to exercise their option under Decree 21.650 to leave the country.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

WMB

William M. Brodhead
Representative in Congress

WMB/js

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